

The Beacon

A Publication of Malesus United Methodist Church

May 2023

A Penney for Your Thoughts

As many of you know, AshLee, Bexley, and I just returned from an impromptu trip to the beach. We plugged the address for the campground in the GPS and set off on our journey. All was well for the first seven hours of the seven hour and ten-minute trip. As we got nearer to our destination and into places that we were unfamiliar with, we relied more and more heavily on the GPS to guide us to our final destination. We took every left and right turn that robotic voice told us to take. Quickly we found that we appeared to be in a place that was way off the beaten path. In blindly following the GPS we had made our way to a water treatment facility and at the end of the path was a gravel road that said "No Vehicles."

We laughed as we backed out of the area and looked at a further zoomed out picture of where we were only to see that we were so close to where we were going, yet so far away. The destination we were seeking was just a stone's throw from where we were, but that way through was closed and provided no access to our home for the next few days. I have raised this question before, and I thought it was time to ask it again, how many times in life do we follow and trust our GPS more than we are willing and able to follow God?

How well do you trust God at this present moment? If you stop and think long enough about the problems in our world, we might quickly become discouraged or downright depressed about the world around us. Everywhere we look, it seems to spell trouble. Rising cases of violence against neighbors, children dying in places where they should expect to be safe, conflict and wars around the world, fractures within the church. And what do we do? We argue, bicker, and grow angry with one another for views that differ from our own.

The question persists, "What do we do and how do we move forward?"

First, I believe that we are called to pray. 17th Century writer and Puritan preach John Bunyan said, "You can do more than pray, after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed." Prayer becomes for us the discipline that grounds us to what and where God is calling us to be. Secondly, we are called to follow after God. So many times, we are so quick to follow our own wants, desires, or pursuits. We instinctively follow ourselves over following God. The church is not called now, nor has it even been called to follow the ways of this world, we are called to seek God.

Friends, in these trying times, it is my prayer that you realize and TRUST that God is enough. Though there are days we might question, our lives are filled with examples where God has provided a way from life and circumstances that seems to provide no way. Don't believe me? Look to Scripture.

God made a way for Abraham to make his descendants as numerous of the stars in the sky.

God made a way for the Israelites on the run from Pharaoh.

God made a way for Joshua when he marched around Jericho and the walls tumbled down.

God made a way for Esther to become queen.

God made a way for Daniel when he was in the midst of the Lion's den.

God made a way for Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego in the fiery furnace.

God made a way for Jonah when he was swallowed by the big fish.

God made a way when Mary was told she would be the mother of the Messiah.

God made a way when the blind regained their sight and the dead were raised.

God made a way for the stone to be rolled away from the tomb.

God will make a way. God will always make a way.

So might we make it our priority that we will not lean on the GPSs of this world and our lives, but upon God. Because as we go, God had promised to go with us and will always make the way.

Looking to God for the way... Travis

Our Weekly Stewardship

April 2, 2023

Attendance

Sunday School	33
Worship	63
Offering	\$4,931.00

April 9, 2023

Attendance

Sunday School	10
Worship	124
Offering	\$4,950.00

April 16, 2023

Attendance

Sunday School	34
Worship	45
Offering	\$2,757.00

April 23, 2023

Attendance

Sunday School	41
Worship	26
Offering	\$1,669.00

Please note that the offering numbers above are a total of pledged giving, unpledged giving, and loose plate giving. They do not include designated gifts.



Finance Report

Due to Tanya's surgery absence and having to set up the new online giving within our system, the March books have not yet been closed at this time.



Joshua 1: 9 (NIV)

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."



Scripture
OF THE MONTH

Breath Prayer



Bless the Lord,
my soul.



May 14
Happy
Mother's Day



Our Communion offerings for:

May : VBS

June: Project Peanut Butter

July: Reelfoot School Supplies

Hannah's Hope: During the month of May, collect all of your change in our Hannah's Hope baby bottles. Hannah's Hope is a Memphis Conference program that provides hope and services for young mothers, families and their children.

Fighting Hunger: Our **Blessings Box** is being used on a regular basis. Leave food in the box on the side of the church, or if the box is full, then leave it in the office. This is a way you can personally take care of hunger close by, and feel good about sharing some of our blessings. **"Bring what you can, take what you need, but above all, be blessed"**

Hooks & Needles: Our ladies have continued to make baby blankets either knit, crocheted or simply flannel receiving blankets and they have been shared with **Butterfly's Embrace, Threads of Love, or Birth Choice**. Thanks to all who have worked in some way on this project. Keep up the good work!

Habitat for Humanity: We are hoping to help out with the construction of a new house in Jackson sometime this summer. If you are interested and can help with construction or non-construction work, please let our team know - either Debbie Durham, Martha Morris, or the church office.

Project 20/20: Remember that we continue to save eyeglasses and sunglasses for next year and we are also collecting aluminum can tabs to send off for the Ronald Mcdonald family house. Bring them to the Missions Cart.

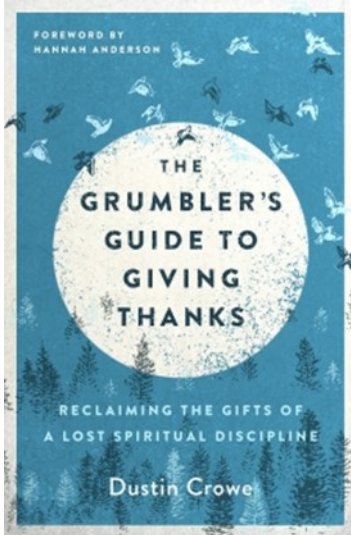
RIFA: Our next RIFA meal will be on Thursday, June 29. Thanks to all those individuals who are always willing to help.

As we continue to reach out to our community, keep your eyes and ears open. If you see a need, share it with one of your fellow church members---maybe we can take care of each other!!

Our Proper Role

"We're called to be witnesses, not lawyers or judges." This quip may bring a chuckle, but it's also a good reminder as we celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord (May 18 this year). Jesus directed his disciples to spread the good news he had taught them: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses ..." (Acts 1:8, NRSV).

While professional lawyers and judges certainly have their place in society and can serve God by working for genuine justice for all, we are not called in daily life to judge others' morality or relationship with God. "Do not judge," Jesus says, "and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37, NIV). And what is one of the most powerful forms of witness to Christ? Forgiveness.



The Good News Sunday School class is pleased to announce the next book to be studied has been selected. With joyful hearts, we will begin on Sunday, May 21st, with the book "The Grumbler's Guide to Giving Thanks" by Dustin Crowe.

Published in October 2020, Pastor Dustin Crowe identifies gratitude as actually necessary to knowing the hope of our gracious God. Dustin examines the biblical founda-

tions of thankfulness and traces how it can reshape every-day Christian living. When we express gratitude in all things, we not only praise our Creator, we also get to know Him better. With *The Grumbler's Guide*, you'll learn how to practice thanksgiving in both simple and extraordinary ways, even when you're tempted to dwell on the negative. You'll find your outlook on life realigned to see the hand of God in everything, strengthening your trust in Him. And in doing so, you'll find greater, more joy-filled reasons to continue expressing thanks to our good and generous God.

If you are still searching for a Sunday School class that can make a difference in your life and the life of your church family, please consider joining us.



On Mother's Day, May 14th, we will have a photo booth opportunity set up in the Fellowship Hall. You are encouraged to snap a picture with your family or with some of your church family. Bring your phone or camera and beginning from 8:15 am - 8:50am and for about 15 minutes following worship, we will offer an opportunity to

"Universal Praise"

See how nature now rejoices in this sunny month of May;
Still to God from all its voices, giving praises day by day. ...

In the glad green woodland alleys, every bird its anthem trills!
While flocks feeding in the valleys, herds upon a thousand hills.

Join with every creature living, here on land, in air, or sea,
In one great worldwide thanksgiving, yielding praise, O God, to thee!

All around us swells the chorus, from this goodly world of ours,
And earth's altar stands before us, sweet with incense from her flowers.

So with nature still confessing, his great goodness, let us pay
Grateful homage for each blessing, of this sunny month of May.

—Anonymous

Sow seeds of kindness
and you will have a perpetual

har-





Our mission is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ by making disciples through our service to our church family, to our community, and to the world.

DID YOU KNOW that Malesus United Methodist Church maintains a stack of business cards in the Narthex for each of us to use?

HOW DO YOU USE THEM, ONE MIGHT ASK? Each church family member is encouraged to keep several of them in their wallet or purse and hand them out to your friends and strangers while you are inviting them to attend our Sunday worship service or Fellowship Dinner and Bible study.

Church Library



Our mission is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ by making disciples through our service to our church family, to our community, and to the World.

As part of our mission to our church family and to the community, we maintain a library of all kinds of books that may help to increase their faith. Unfortunately, it can become tedious to find a specific book in our library or to find a book for a specific topic. As a result, it is difficult for the library to stay as a valued resource. Our solution is to place a digital catalog on our website to help anyone find a book that fills a spiritual need.

We are still working out an easy-to-use system to check out our books and other reference materials. There's still a bunch of work to do to make it happen. However, whenever returning a book to the library please do NOT put the book back on the shelves but simply place the book in the fabric box marked for the return of library materials.

Any day now we hope to have our new digital library online via our website at www.malesusumc.org. While there are less than 100 books online as this article was written, the day will come when all the materials in our library – including DVDs – will have been added to our digital library.



June 4th - 7th

Watch your bulletin, our Facebook page, and website for more details.





Wishing our graduates all the best in their new adventures ahead!

Dylan Ard

Dylan is graduating from Madison Academic High School and plans to attend the Tennessee College of Applied Technology in Jackson and study Welding.

Emma Blankenship

Emma is graduating from JCS and will be attending Union University this Fall.

Bobby Perry

Bobby is a graduate of Jackson Christian School and plans to attend Union University.

Maley Replogle

Maley is graduating from Jackson Christian School with plans to attend Jackson State Community College in the Fall.

London Tubbs

London is a graduate of Madison Academic High School and will be attending The University of Memphis in the Fall ,where she will study Music Business.

Kala Morris

Kala is graduating from Mississippi State with a Bachelor of Science in Food Service.

Cole Powers

Cole is graduating from Samford University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a major in International Relations. Cole will be traveling to France later this year where he will work on his Masters.



According to Peter, at what time of day did the Holy Spirit come upon the disciples on Pentecost?

- A. 9 a.m.
- B. Noon
- C. 3:30 p.m.
- D. 9 p.m.

Answer: A (See Acts 2:15.)

A 96-year-old lady was a faithful attendant at my women’s Bible studies.



She came with her lessons prepared and knew all the answers. One day a tactless member asked her, “Why do you work so hard on these lessons when you’re so old and it doesn’t matter?” Little Bess Elkins looked up and said confidently, “I’m cramming for my finals.”

Thank you, church family, for all of the cards, calls, prayers, and wonderful food during my knee surgery and mending. You sure know how to make someone feel loved.



Hugs,
Tanya and Randall

Dear Friends of the Ministry, Thank you so much for your donation to Birth Choice; I assure you that it will be put to good use! May the Lord richly bless you for your kindness to His unborn children and their young mothers.

Serving Christ for Life,
Chris Veteto, Clinic Director

Malesus U.M.C.

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A Stephen Ministry Congregation



A Safe Sanctuaries Congregation



Our mission is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ by making disciples through our service to our church, community, & world.

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JACKSON, TN 38301

PERMIT # 11

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

Life Immortal

At the end of May, Americans honor those who've died for our country — and remember all deceased loved ones. These times of reflection, often in cemeteries, can make us ponder our own mortality. Even some Christians may fear the unknown of death.

Yet because of our faith, followers of Jesus can aim to make productive use of whatever earthly time we have left. We know the grave isn't the end. Consider this poetic description of life everlasting from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "Dust thou art, to dust returnest / was not spoken of the soul."

To our death-defying, death-defeating God we pray: Eternal God, empower us to take hold of the eternal life to which Christ calls us, and to boldly testify of it to anyone who asks the reason for our hope. To the immortal King of the ages, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, to him be honor, glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Come Grow
WITH US



2 Chronicles 6:41, NRSV

Breath of the Spirit

The breathing I did yesterday will not keep me alive today. I must continue to breathe afresh every moment, or my life will cease. In like manner, yesterday's grace and spiritual strength must be renewed, and the Holy Spirit must continue to breathe on my soul from moment to moment in order that I may continue to enjoy him and to work the works he has assigned me.

—Augustus Toplady